



Council Memorandum

Date: September 1st, 2020
To: Committee of the Whole
From: Councillor Ashmore
Re: Online Petitions

Recommendation

That the Memorandum from Councillor Ashmore, **regarding an Online Petition Option**, be received;

That Staff create an online petition option, in addition to the current hard-copy process, for bringing petitions to Council;

That Staff report back by Q4, 2020 with options for an online petition that meet the requirements of the municipal act; and

That this recommendation be forwarded to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Rationale:

A petition is a document presented by the community to Council to voice their opinion on or support for an issue or cause of municipal importance. It is one of the best ways to express support for a matter to Council.

The current petition protocol allows for no electronic web-based documents and requires each signatory to allow the City of Kawartha Lakes to publish their address.

The Covid-19 pandemic health protocols have made it more difficult for citizens to civically engage.

An online petition process has been used by the Parliament of Canada since 2015, alongside a traditional paper petition option, with good success. Rather than publishing the addresses of petition signatories, it gathers and secures that information in a way that protects privacy and verifies identity with an email link.